

Message Text

SECRET

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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 10541

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TAGS: PBOR EG IS JO XF
SUBJ: MI-E PEACE NEGOTIATIONS - LUNCHEON CONVERSATION BETWEEN
SEC VANCE AND FONMIN DAYAN, AUG 6, 78

1. DURING PRIVATE LUNCHEON MEETING ATTENDED ALSO BY RUBENSTEIN AND LEWIS AS NOTETAKERS ON AUGUST 6 AT PLAZA HOTEL JERUSALEM, SECRETARY VANCE AND DAYAN DISCUSSED A NUMBER OF ASPECTS OF ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN PEACE NEGOTIATIONS. THIS TELEGRAM SUMMARIZES MAJOR POINTS.

2. DAYAN DESCRIBED AT SOME LENGTH HIS CONTINUING SUSPICIONS THAT SADAT IS NOT REALLY PREPARED AT THIS POINT TO MAKE PEACE IN VIEW OF THE DIFFICULTIES HE HAS RUN INTO WITH THE SAUDIS AND THE JORDANIANS IN PARTICULAR. FOR THIS REASON, DAYAN BELIEVES IT MIGHT BE EASIER FOR SADAT TO FALL BACK TO A PARTIAL AGREEMENT BASED ON ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL TO THE EL ARISH-RAS MOHAMED LINE IN EXCHANGE FOR NON-BELLIGERENCY. DAYAN ARGUED THAT THIS WOULD GIVE SADAT ALL OF THE MAJOR SINAI OBJECTIVES WITHOUT REQUIRING HIM TO DEFEND A TOTAL SEPARATE PEACE IN THE ARAB WORLD. THE SECRETARY SAID HE THOUGHT, ON THE CONTRARY, THAT A PARTIAL AGREEMENT WOULD BE THE MOST DANGEROUS COURSE FOR SADAT TO TAKE, AND THAT HE

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BELIEVED THE CHANCE WAS VERY REMOTE THAT SADAT WOULD GO DOWN THIS ROAD. DAYAN ASKED WHAT THEN ARE THE REALISTIC CHANCES OF REACHING AN AGREEMENT WHICH THE OTHER ARABS WOULD ACCEPT. WERE THERE ANY ALTERNATIVES TO A PRIOR COMMITMENT TO TOTAL WITHDRAWAL WHICH MIGHT MEET SADAT'S PROBLEM. THE SECRETARY SAID THAT SADAT HAS PUT A GREAT DEAL OF STRESS ON THE LANGUAGE ABOUT THE INADMISSIBILITY

OF THE ACQUISITION OF TERRITORIES THROUGH WAR. THIS LANGUAGE, TIED IN WITH OTHER REFERENCES TO 242, MIGHT POSSIBLY BE ENOUGH.

3. THE SECRETARY THEN ASKED DAYAN WHY HE WAS SO OPPOSED TO PURSUING THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES EFFORT. DAYAN REPLIED THAT IT WAS BECAUSE SADAT APPARENTLY NEEDED SUCH DEFINITE LANGUAGE IN A DECLARATION, LANGUAGE WHICH IN THE ABSTRACT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR ISRAEL TO ACCEPT. SUPPOSING, HE SAID, WE AGREED TO "VAGUE PRINCIPLES" WITH THE PRACTICAL DECISIONS BEING TAKEN ONLY AFTER FIVE YEARS. IF SADAT MADE THEN A TREATY WITH US OVER SINAI, HE WOULD BE ATTACKED BY BOTH THE SAUDIS AND BY ASSAD. HE SAID HE HOPED HIS PESSIMISM WAS WRONG, BUT THAT HE COULD NOT SEE ANY WAY FOR ISRAEL TO AGREE TO SADAT'S CURRENT FORMULATIONS FOR A DECLARATION. IN RESPONSE TO THE SECRETARY'S RENEWED QUERY ABOUT A REFERENCE TO THE INADMISSIBILITY OF WAR, DAYAN REPLIED THAT HE DID NOT THINK THE BEGIN GOVERNMENT WOULD GO FURTHER ON THE LANGUAGE OF A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES THAN IT HAS ALREADY GONE IN ITS LATEST DRAFT. "THIS IS ABOUT OUR MAXIMUM POSITION."

4. DAYAN SAID HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND WHY SADAT WOULD NOT TAKE WHAT HE HAS NOW OBTAINED AND ACT ON IT. "WE HAVE SAID THAT AFTER FIVE YEARS THE QUESTION OF

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SOVEREIGNTY WILL BE DECIDED. WE CANNOT WITHDRAW ALL AT ONCE. HE CAN GET A DOWN PAYMENT NOW, AND HOLD OUT A FINAL PEACE TREATY UNTIL FIVE YEARS HAVE PASSED AND WITHDRAWAL HAS BEEN ACHIEVED." DAYAN CONCLUDED BY REFERRING AGAIN TO SADAT'S PROBLEM OF FINDING LANGUAGE WHICH COULD ALSO APPLY ULTIMATELY TO THE GOLAN. HE SAID HE WAS SKEPTICAL, BUT THAT "IF SADAT REALLY HAS THE GUTS TO MAKE PEACE NOW, IT WILL BE WONDERFUL."

5. THERE WAS THEN SOME DISCUSSION AS TO WHY SADAT SHIFTED HIS FOCUS FROM THE EFFORT TO REACH AGREEMENT OVER SINAI TO A CONCENTRATION ON THE WEST BANK AND GAZA. DAYAN ARGUED THAT HE HAS NOW SET UP A DOMINO EFFECT WHICH WILL BLOCK ANY USEFUL RESULT: HE WILL NOT MAKE PEACE OVER SINAI UNLESS JORDAN JOINS IN THE NEGOTIATIONS, AND JORDAN WILL NOT DARE TO JOIN WITHOUT SYRIA. THE SECRETARY SAID HE WAS NOT CERTAIN AT ALL ABOUT THIS ANALOGY. HE SAID THAT PRINCE HASSAN HAD STATED THE PRECEDING WEEK THAT THE JORDANIANS MERELY NEED TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE ULTIMATE SHAPE OF THE SETTLEMENT BEFORE THEY COULD RISK JOINING. IN ANY CASE, SAID THE SECRETARY, I DO NOT THINK SADAT CARES AT ALL ABOUT THE GOLAN.

HOWEVER, HE ADDED, ALTHOUGH HE THOUGHT THAT JORDAN WOULD GO AHEAD REGARDLESS OF SYRIAN ACTIONS, SAUDI ARABIAN ATTITUDE IS A MUCH MORE COMPLICATING FACTOR FOR THE JORDANIANS AS WELL AS FOR THE EGYPTIANS. DAYAN SAID HE AGREED.

6. THE SECRETARY THEN ASKED DAYAN TO EXPLAIN THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN "TERRITORIAL COMPROMISE" AND THE "1967 BORDERS WITH MINOR MODIFICATIONS." DAYAN THEN DESCRIBED AT LENGTH THE HISTORY OF THE ALLON PLAN AND THE NATURE OF ALLON'S PROPOSALS. HE SAID THAT WHEN THE PHRASE "TERRITORIAL COMPROMISE" IS USED IN ISRAEL, IT HAS TRADITIONALLY REFERRED TO SOMETHING LIKE THE ALLON PLAN, THAT IS A SUBSTANTIAL PARTITION OF THE WEST

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BANK. IT HAD TO BE A SUBSTANTIAL DIVISION OF THE TERRITORY WITH REAL MILITARY SIGNIFICANCE. THE PROBLEM IS, OF COURSE, THAT THERE IS NO SUCH PARTITION LINE WHICH ANYONE CAN FIND WHICH WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE ARABS. BY THIS TIME THE CONCEPT OF PARTITION HAS BEEN SO THOROUGHLY EXPLORED WITH THE ARABS THAT EVERYONE KNOWS IT IS UNACCEPTABLE AND UNWORKABLE. THE SECRETARY SAID THAT THEN IN PRACTICE "POINT TWO IN YOUR DECLARATION BEFORE THE KNESSET DOESNT MEAN MUCH." DAYAN AGREED THAT IT IS NOT A PRACTICAL SOLUTION, ALTHOUGH SHOULD ANYONE PROPOSE A CONCRETE PARTITION LINE THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT IS NOW HONESTLY PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE ABOUT IT.

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7. THE SECRETARY THEN ASKED IF THERE WERE AGREEMENTS ON PARTITION, AND IF ISRAEL COULD STATION ITS TROOPS ON PORTIONS OF THE ARAB TERRITORY OF THE WEST BANK, WHAT WOULD BE WRONG WITH THIS RESULT. DAYAN REPLIED THAT THERE WERE TWO POINTS TO BE CONSIDERED. FIRST, ISRAEL NEEDS BOTH FIXED RADAR AND DEFENSIVE POSITION ON THE HIGH GROUND, PLUS FREE MOVEMENT AND THE ABILITY TO PATROL ALONG THE JORDAN RIVER IN ORDER TO SECURE THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN THE ARAB AREA AND ISRAEL PROPER. UNLESS THIS PATROLLING CAPACITY EXISTS, THERE IS NO WAY TO SAFEGUARD THE EASTERN BORDER OF ISRAEL, SINCE THE CONCEPT WOULD BE ONE OF TOTALLY FREE MOVEMENT BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE WEST BANK. SECONDLY, AFTER PARTITION, WOULD ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS AND MILITARY ENCAMPMENTS REMAIN OR BE REMOVED?

8. THE SECRETARY SAID THAT THE EGYPTIAN POSITION IS THAT WITHDRAWAL MUST TAKE PLACE EVENTUALLY FROM ALL ARAB LANDS, WITH PERHAPS MINOR MODIFICATIONS TO THE WEST BANK BORDERS; BUT THAT ISRAEL SHOULD HAVE THE ABILITY TO RETAIN SECURITY INSTALLATIONS FOR PROTECTION AGAINST ATTACK. AND, HE SAID, THE EGYPTIANS WILL TAKE A VERY LIBERAL, GENEROUS VIEW OF ISRAEL'S SECURITY NEEDS. DAYAN RESPONDED THAT PERHAPS THIS EGYPTIAN POSITION MADE SENSE WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THEIR CONCEPT OF A SOLUTION; I.E.,

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EVENTUAL WITHDRAWAL TO THE 1967 BORDERS. BUT THEY STILL HAVE TO ANSWER THE QUESTION "WHO WOULD TAKE CARE OF BORDER SECURITY FOR ISRAEL, AND WHERE?"

9. THE SECRETARY THEN MENTIONED PROGRESS WHICH HAD BEEN MADE AT THE LEEDS CASTLE TALKS IN EXPLORING POSSIBILITIES OF VISIBLY ENDING THE MILITARY OCCUPATION AT THE BEGINNING OF THE FIVE-YEAR PERIOD. DID DAYAN AGREE THAT THIS WAS A POSSIBLE ROUTE TO EXPLORE? DAYAN AGREED THAT IT WAS, BUT REMINDED THE SECRETARY THAT THERE IS A MAJOR SEMANTIC PROBLEM TO OVERCOME WITH BEGIN OVER THE WORDS "MILITARY OCCUPATION." BEGIN DID NOT ACCEPT RETROACTIVELY THE VALIDITY OF THE PHRASE AS APPLYING TO ISRAELI ADMINISTRATION OF THE TERRITORIES. THE SECRETARY ASKED "WHAT ABOUT THE CONCEPT OF WITHDRAWAL OF FORCES?" HE HAD GATHERED THAT DAYAN BELIEVED SOME COULD INDEED BE WITHDRAWN DURING THE FIVE YEARS. DAYAN SAID THAT HE DID AGREE, AND THAT A CAREFUL SURVEY WOULD BE NEEDED OF WHERE THE FORCES ARE PRESENTLY STATIONED AND WHERE THEY COULD BE PLACED UNDER AN AUTONOMY REGIME.

10. DAYAN THEN SAID THAT HE FELT IT WOULD BE NECESSARY FOR THE UNITED STATES TO TAKE ON CERTAIN COMMITMENTS IN EXCHANGES OF LETTERS ANALOGOUS TO THOSE WHICH WERE WORKED OUT AS PART OF SINAI II. IF ISRAEL WITHDREW SOME OF ITS FORCES, COULD THERE, FOR EXAMPLE, BE A "NO WAR UNDER-TAKING" BASED ON EXCHANGES OF LETTERS TO AND FROM THE U.S., WHICH WOULD ASSURE ISRAEL THAT JORDAN FOR EXAMPLE WOULD NOT ATTACK. IF THERE WERE TO BE NO FULL PEACE TREATY FOR FIVE YEARS, THEN ISRAEL WOULD HAVE TO ASK THE US FOR SOME SORT OF ASSURANCES OF THIS TYPE. THE SECRETARY SAID "I WOULD NOT RULE THAT OUT."

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11. THE SECRETARY THEN REFERRED BACK TO THE CONCEPT OF PHASED IMPLEMENTATION OF AGREEMENTS DISCUSSED AT LEEDS. HE ASKED DAYAN IF THIS CONCEPT IS ACCEPTABLE TO ISRAEL. DAYAN REPLIED THAT IT CONFLICTED WITH ISRAEL'S ORIGINAL IDEA OF THE AUTONOMY PLAN BEING PART OF PEACE TREATIES. BUT HE WOULD NOT RULE IT OUT, CITING RECENT STATEMENTS BY PRIME MINISTER BEGIN ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF ACHIEVING "PEACEFUL RELATIONS" IF FULL PEACE TREATIES WERE NOT NOW AVAILABLE.

12. FINALLY THERE WAS A DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE FORMULAS GOVERNING ISRAELI LAND ACQUISITION IN THE WEST BANK, CENTERED AROUND THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS OF ISRAELIS TO PURCHASE LAND VERSUS GOVERNMENT OR PRIVATELY SUPPORTED SETTLEMENT SCHEMES ON PUBLIC LANDS. DAYAN MENTIONED THAT HE HAD BEEN INTRIGUED WITH THIS DISTINCTION WHEN BILL QUANDT HAD FIRST RAISED IT OVER LUNCH AT LEEDS. IN AN AUTONOMY REGIME IN WHICH THE ARAB WEST BANKERS WERE RUNNING THE ADMINISTRATION COUNCIL, IT WOULD BE OBVIOUS THAT STATE LANDS SHOULD NOT BE UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE ISRAELIS, OR AT LEAST THIS WOULD BE A LEGITIMATE ISSUE FOR NEGOTIATION. IF SOVEREIGNTY WERE BEING LEFT IN ABEYANCE, THEN SURELY THE ISRAELIS DID NOT HAVE A SOVEREIGN RIGHT TO DISPOSE OF PUBLIC LANDS WHILE IT WAS IN ABEYANCE. THE SECRETARY SAID HE THOUGHT THAT FOR THE ARABS, THE DISPOSITION OF THE PUBLIC LANDS IN THE WEST BANK IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE. DAYAN SAID THAT THIS DISTINCTION MIGHT BE EASIER FOR ISRAEL, AND THAT THE WHOLE QUESTION DESERVED MORE CONSIDERATION.

13. ON THIS NOTE, THE LUNCHEON CONVERSATION ENDED. LEWIS

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